Caddo language

Caddo is a Native American language, the traditional language of the Caddo Nation.[4] It is critically endangered, with no exclusively Caddo-speaking community and only 25 speakers as of 2009 who acquired the language as children outside school instruction.[5] Caddo has several mutually intelligible dialects. The most commonly used dialects are Hasinai and Hainai; others include Kadohadacho, Natchitoches and Yatasi.[6]

Caddo	
Hasí:nay	
Native to	United States
Region	Caddo County in western Oklahoma
Ethnicity	5,290 Caddo people (2010 census)[1]
Native speakers	25 (2007)[2]
Language family	Caddoan • **Caddo**
Language codes	
ISO 639-2	cad (https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?code_ID=72)
ISO 639-3	cad
Glottolog	cadd1256 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/cadd1256)[3]
Linguasphere	64-BBA-a

Map showing the distribution of Oklahoma Indian Languages

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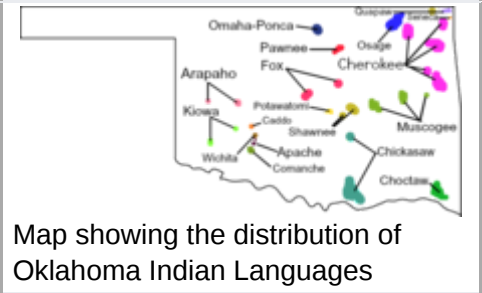   Glottalization
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Linguistic connections

Caddo is linguistically related to the members of the Northern Caddoan language family; these include the Pawnee-Kitsai (Keechi) languages (Arikara, Kitsai, and Pawnee) and the Wichita language. Kitsai and Wichita are now extinct, and Pawnee and Arikara each have fewer surviving speakers than Caddo does.[7]

Another language, Adai, is postulated to have been a Caddoan language while it was extant, but because of scarce resources and the language's extinct status, this connection is not conclusive, and Adai is generally considered a language isolate.[7]

Use and language revitalization efforts

The Caddo Nation is making a concentrated effort to save the Caddo language. The Kiwat Hasinay ('Caddo Home') foundation, located at the tribal home of Binger, Oklahoma, offers regular Caddo language classes, in addition to creating dictionaries, phrase books, and other Caddo language resources. They have also made a long-term project of trying to record and digitally archive Caddoan oral traditions, which are an important part of Caddo culture.[8] As of 2012, the Caddo Nation teaches weekly language classes; language CDs, a coloring book, and an online learning website are also available.[9][10] As of 2010, a Caddo app is available for Android phones.[11]

There is a Caddo grammar, published August 2018,[12] and an in-depth examination of the Caddo verb, published in 2004.[13]

Phonology

Consonants

Caddo has 19 contrastive consonants, a normal-sized consonant inventory. It is somewhat unusual in that it lacks liquid consonants.[14] The IPA symbols for the consonants of Caddo are given below:

		Bilabial	Alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal
			plain	ejective	plain	ejective	plain	ejective	
Nasal		m	n						
Plosive	**voiceless**	p	t	t'			k	k'	ʔ
	voiced	b	d						
Affricate	plain		ts	ts'	tʃ	tʃ'			
Fricative			s		ʃ				h
Approximant					j		w		

Caddo also features contrastive gemination of consonants, which is generally indicated in orthography by a double letter: /nɑ́ttih/ "woman."[7]

Vowels

Caddo has three contrastive vowel qualities, /i/, /ɑ/, and /u/, and two contrastive vowel lengths, long and short, for a total of 6 vowel phonemes.

	Front	Central	Back
High	i iː		u uː
Low		a aː	

However, there is a great deal of phonetic variation in the short vowels. The high front vowel /i/ is generally realized as its lower counterpart /ɪ/, and the high back vowel /u/ is similarly often realized as its lower counterpart /ʊ/. The low central vowel /a/ has a wider range of variation, pronounced (most commonly) as /

ɐ/ when it is followed by any consonant except a semivowel or a laryngeal consonant, as a low central vowel (for which IPA lacks a symbol) at the end of an open syllable or when followed by a laryngeal consonant, and as /ə/ before a semivowel.

In general, the long vowels do not feature this kind of variation but are simply lengthened versions of the phonemes that are represented in the chart.[15]

Caddo also has four diphthongs, which can be written a number of different ways; the transcription below shows the typical Caddo Nation orthography (a vowel paired with a glide) and the IPA version, represented with vowels and offglides.[7]

- **ay** /aj/ – English *eye*
- **aw** /aw/ – English *ou*t
- **iw** /iw/ – English *ew*
- **uy** /uj/ – English b*oy*

Tone

Caddo is a tone language. There are three tones in Caddo: low tone, which is unmarked **(a)**; high tone, which is marked by an acute accent over the vowel **(á)**; and falling tone, which is always long and marked by a grave accent over the vowel **(àː)**.

Tone occurs both lexically (as a property of the word), non-lexically (as a result of tonological processes), and also as a marker of certain morphological features. For instance, the past tense marker is associated with high tone.[15]

Tonological processes

There are three processes that can create non-lexical high tone within a syllable nucleus.[15] See the section below for an explanation of other phonological changes which may occur in the following examples.

> **1. H-deletion**
> **VhCC → V^{High}CC**
> An /h/ before two consonants is deleted and the preceding vowel gains high tone:
> **/kiʃwɑhn-t-ʔuh/ → [kiʃwɑ́nːt'uh] "parched corn"**
>
> **2. Low tone-deletion**
> **VRV^{Low}C → V^{High}RC**
> A low tone vowel following a resonant (sonorant consonant) is deleted, and the preceding vowel gains a high tone.
> **/sa-baka-nah-hah/ → [sawkɑ́nːhah] "does he mean it?"**
>
> **3. Backwards assimilation**
> **VRV^{High} → V^{High}RV^{High}**
> A vowel preceding a resonant and a high tone vowel gains high tone.
> */nanɑ́/ → [nánɑ́ː] "that, that one"'*

Phonological processes

Vowel syncope

There are two vowel syncope processes in Caddo, which both involve the loss of a low-tone vowel in certain environments.[15] The first syncope process was described above as low tone-deletion. The second syncope process is described below:

> **Interconsonantal syncope**
> **VCV^{Low}CV → VCCV**
> A low-tone vowel in between a vowel-consonant sequence and a consonant-vowel sequence is deleted.
> **(Shown with intermediary form): /kak#(ʔi)t'us-jaʔah/ → kahʔit'u ʃaʔah →**
> **[kahʔit'u ʃʔah] "foam, suds"**

Consonant cluster simplification

As a result of the syncope processes described above, several consonant clusters emerge that are then simplified by way of phonological process. At the present stage of research, the processes seem to be unrelated, but they represent a phonetic reduction in consonant clusters; therefore, they are listed below without much further explanation.[15]

1. **nw → mm**
2. **tw → pp**
3. **tk → kk**
4. **n → m / __ [+labial]**
5. **ʔʔ → ʔ**
6. **hh → h**
7. **ʔ+Resonant → Resonant+ʔ / syllable final**

Syllable coda simplification

Similar to the consonant cluster simplification process, there are four processes by which a syllable-final consonant is altered:[15]

1. **b → w / syllable final**
2. **d → t / syllable final**
3. **k → h / syllable final (but not before k)**
4. **tʃ → ʃ / syllable final**

Word boundary processes

There are three word-boundary processes in Caddo, all of which occur word-initially:

1. **n → t / # __**
2. **w → p / # __**
3. **y → d / # __**
   ni-huhn-id-ah/ → [tihúndah] "she returned"

Such processes are generally not applicable in the case of proclitics (morphemes that behave like an affix and are phonologically dependent on the morpheme to which they are attached). An example is the English articles.[15]

Glottalization

Caddo has a glottalization process by which any voiceless stop or affricate (except p) becomes an ejective when it is followed by a glottal stop.[15]

> **Glottalization**
> **[-sonorant, -continuant, -voice, -labial, -spread glottis] → [+constricted glottis] / ___ [+constricted glottis, -spread glottis]**
> A voiceless stop or affricate (except p) becomes an ejective when it is followed by a glottal stop.
> **/sik-ʔuh/ → [sik'uh] "rock"**

Palatalization

Caddo has a palatalization process that affects certain consonants when they are followed by /j/, with simultaneous loss of the /j/.

> **Palatalization**
> **a) /kj/ → [tʃ]**
> **b) /sj/ → [ʃ]**
> /kak#ʔa-k'as-jaʔah/ → [kahʔak'a ʃʔah] " one's leg"

(Melnar includes a third palatization process, /tj/ → [ts]. However, /ts/ is not a palatal affricate so it has not been included here. Nevertheless, the third process probably occurs.)[15]

Lengthening

Caddo has three processes by which a syllable nucleus (vowel) may be lengthened:[15]

> **Syllable Lengthening Process One**
> **V^{High}(Resonant)CVC# → V^{High}(Resonant)ːCVC#**
> When the second-to-last syllable in a word has a nucleus consisting of a high tone vowel (and, optionally, a resonant), and the last syllable has the form CVC, the high tone nucleus is then lengthened.
> **/bak-'ʔawáwaʔ/ → [bahʔwáːwaʔ] "they said"**

> **Syllable Lengthening Process Two**
> **V(Resonant)ʔ → V(Resonant) ː / in any prepenultimate syllable**
> In any syllable before the penultimate, a glottal stop coda is deleted, and the remaining nucleus is lengthened.
> **/hák#ci-(ʔi)bíhn-saʔ/ → [háhciːbíːsaʔ] " I have it on my back"**

> **Syllable Lengthening Process Three**
> **a) ij → iː**
> **b) uw → uː**
> Any syllable nucleus with ij or uw must convert to a long vowel.

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